

E 286

.M92

1867

Copy 1



Bailey, F. M.

Oration delivered...

at Mount Carroll, Carroll Co.
Ill. July 4th, 1867.





Class E 286

Book M92

1867





ORATION

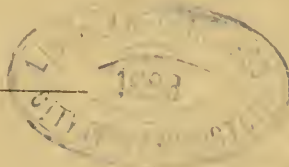
DELIVERED BY

HON. J. M. BAILEY

AT

MOUNT CARROLL, CARROLL COUNTY, ILLINOIS,

JULY 4th, 1867.



E 286

, M 92

1867

CORRESPONDENCE.

HON. J. M. BAILEY, Freeport, Ill.

MOUNT CARROLL, Ill., July 15, '67.

Dear Sir:—The undersigned residents of Carroll County, who listened to your address at Mount Carroll on the 4th of July instant, beg leave to express to you our high appreciation of your effort on that occasion, and respectfully request of you a copy of your address for publication in order to gratify ourselves as well as a large number of our citizens who could not be present to hear it. Hoping you will find no sufficient reason for withholding it from publication,

We are, sir, very respectfully and truly yours, &c.,

H. VANDAGRIFT,
WM. H. WILDEY,
JOSEPHUS SMITH,
H. BITNER,
JOHN IRVINE, JR.,
H. S. BRADLEY,

NELSON FLETCHER,
ECKER & GUNN,
H. J. GRIFFITH,
B. P. SHICK,
WM. CLARK,
V. ARMOUR,
D. D. LIGHTY.

FREEPORT, July 16, 1867.

Gentlemen:—In compliance with your request I herewith transmit to you for publication, my address delivered at Mount Carroll on the 4th day of July instant. Thanking you for your expressions of appreciation, I am,

Very truly yours,

JOS. M. BAILEY.

To Messrs. H. Vandagriff, Nelson Fletcher, and others.

E 286
M 92

ORATION.

Why is it, Mr. President, that I see before me so large an assemblage of my fellow-citizens on this occasion? What common motive, what pervading impulse, has brought us together to-day? Why this holiday attire, these voices of gladness, and this festive cheer? What, sir, are the events; what, sir, the ideas which we thus commemorate? Why is it that not only here but everywhere, wherever that flag is flung to the breeze, or there beats a loyal American heart, the booming of cannon, the rolling of drums, the unfurling of banners, and the many-tongued voices of eloquence and song are invoked to give utterance to the great swelling patriotic emotions which arise in the hearts of the American people upon the recurrence of this our great national anniversary?

We are here to celebrate that sublime event in history which severed our political relations with the mother country and secured for us a name and a place among the nations of the earth. We have met to commemorate the patriotism and chivalrous devotion with which the fathers of the Revolution, braving the insolent and relentless despotism of the British crown, pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to the achievement and maintenance of our independence. And we are here to commemorate the unswerving fidelity with which in the face of difficulties and discouragements, before which the stoutest heart might well sink and the bravest cheek blanch with dread and apprehension, that pledge was redeemed and our nation forever freed from the yoke of British oppression.

We have met, sir, to celebrate these glorious traditions of the Revolution, and to do honor to the memory of those brave and intrepid men who fought the early battles of the Republic and achieved our independence. But, sir, this great national anniversary comes to us fraught with a deeper meaning and a higher sig-

nificance. The Declaration of Independence was more than a mere political revolution. It was more than a mere forcible disruption of the political ties between the British Empire and her American Colonies. It was a declaration made in the interest of all humanity. It was a revolution against the encroachments of despotic power, and the grand assertion of the right of man to self-government, made not merely in the interest of a single generation or people, but made for the entire world of mankind, and for all the generations that are to come. Such, sir, are the thoughts which the day we celebrate is calculated to stir up within us. Such are the soul-stirring and sublime truths coming down to us to-day from the past, and forcing themselves upon our consideration.

Let us rejoice, my fellow-citizens, that we are permitted to celebrate this day. Let us rejoice in the glorious memories that come down to us from the days of the Revolution and cluster thick about us on every hand. Let us rejoice that "the Tree of Liberty planted by our fathers and watered with their blood" has withstood the tempest of war which so lately burst upon it. Let us thank God that we still have a country—that the foundations laid broad and deep by the fathers of the Republic, have withstood the blasts of partizan strife and the rude shock of civil war. We meet here to-day beneath the bright sun and smiling skies, and the gentle breath of summer murmurs softly about us. Fitting emblems these of the present happy condition of our country. Our Nation's sky so lately overcast, by the dark and portentous clouds of war, and rent by the fierce shock of contending hosts, has broken away on every hand, and the bright sun of peace is streaming through his floods of light and hope. Peace reigns through all our borders. The mighty armies, whose tramp for these years has shaken the continent, are no longer in

the field. The horrid enginery of war which, upon a hundred battle-fields, has reaped down the fell harvests of death, has forgotten its hideous commerce. Brother no longer lifts his hand against brother in fratricidal strife. The noise of battle is no longer heard, and that glorious old flag, stained with no dishonor, and without one star erased, now proudly floats over every rood of our national territory, from Maine to the Rio Grande. I thank God that I have lived to see this day. I thank God that in this year of Grace, 1867, *I am an American citizen*. If in that elder day of Roman pride and power to be a *Roman* was better than to be a *King*, so to-day the name of *American citizen* is a prouder title than can be conferred upon any man by the princes of the earth.

It is befitting that we come together from year to year, upon the annual return of this day, and muse upon the lessons which its history teaches us. It is befitting that we call to mind its heroisms and its sacrifices—its battles, its defeats, and its victories—that we mark well the unfaltering purpose, the high resolve and the contempt of danger and death with which our patriot sires persevered through that long and arduous struggle, until their efforts were crowned at length with victory. Wholesome are the lessons which that history teaches. It is befitting that we keep green the memory of the heroism displayed on Bunker Hill, at Saratoga, and at Yorktown; that we recall the patient endurance with which our fathers tracked with shoeless feet the snows of Valley Forge. I would that that history were more deeply engraven upon the memories of the men of this generation. I would that we might oftener contemplate the spectacle of such heroism, such fortitude, such patriotic devotion. I would that our national councils had to-day a Jefferson, a Hancock, an Adams, a Jay, a Hamilton or a Patrick Henry. I would that the mantle of Washington might fall upon the chieftain of to-day, that the wisdom which then fashioned our institutions might now give shape to the destinies of the Republic.

The Declaration of Independence has just been read in your hearing. You have listened to that long catalogue of abuses and usurpations, undertaken and persistently followed out by the witless tyrant who sat calmly weaving the web of our enslavement in the palace of St.

James. You have listened to the story of kingly prerogative, irresponsible and despotic disregarding, one after another, the time-honored guaranties, and overthrowing with a ruthless hand the bulwarks of political freedom. The charters, laws and forms of government, under which the American colonies had grown from feeble beginnings to populous and powerful commonwealths, were arbitrarily taken away or fundamentally altered. The administration of justice in all its forms and departments was obstructed or made subservient to the purposes of arbitrary power. Burdens, unusual and oppressive, and unwarranted by law, were remorselessly laid upon the necks of the devoted colonists. All the elements of political power in the colonies, whether legislative, ministerial or judicial, were one after another gathered up and absorbed in an irresponsible and overshadowing kingly prerogative, evincing a design on the part of the British crown of bringing those colonies forever beneath the heel of an absolute despotism. Thus was the issue made up between the doctrine of despotic authority and unlimited prerogative on the one hand, represented by George the Third, and the doctrine of innate God-given rights on the other, represented by the oppressed and downtrodden Colonies. On the one side was the political establishment, entrenched behind the despotic maxim of the "Divine right of Kings;" and, on the other, a political philosophy, founding lawful government only on the consent of the governed. On such an issue our fathers, appealing to the dispassionate judgment of mankind and to the God of battles, assembled in Congress and solemnly put forth to the world the immortal Declaration of Independence. Then first in the history of man were clearly enunciated and put into form the great fundamental principles of self-government. Then and there *human rights—inmate God-given rights*,—the rights of man *as man*, achieved their first great crowning victory. Then it was that our fathers, breaking loose from the traditions and entanglements of old systems, and giving the lie to the despotic dogmas and political maxims of Europe, such as the Divine right of Kings to rule, the subordination of ranks, classes and castes, the subordination of the many to the few,—breaking loose, I say, from all these, our fathers set up a system having

for its corner stone the maxim that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and for its living principle the self-evident truth that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Then was it that our fathers, illumined as it were by an inspiration from Heaven, gave to us a political system embodying the highest and noblest civilization that had yet been wrought out, and on whose ample banner there even now floats the last syllable of progress that has yet been written. They put forth to the world a truth not the peculiar property of one nation or race of men, not applicable merely to this new trans-Atlantic civilization, but a truth lying at the foundation of all rightful human government everywhere, and answering the indefinite, unuttered yearnings of all of earth's unnumbered millions. The nations heard it with joy, as the returning exile from childhood first listens to the scarcely remembered accents of his mother tongue.

The Declaration of Independence! *Immortal achievement!* Let the eye wander back for a moment along the track of those centuries whose vague and unuttered longings for justice and liberty first found definite shape and expression in this memorable document. The world had been groping for centuries in the darkness of oppression. Mankind were bound down by a thousand subtle maxims spun from the fallacious web of a despotic philosophy. They were fettered by an artificial system of feudal servitudes and subordinations. They were fettered by the craft of kings on the one hand, and on the other by the craft of the priesthood. A despotic political system denied all rights in man, save those derived from the king as the fountain head, who arrogantly assumed to rule by Divine right. A despotic system of religion denied the right to worship God, save in the forms prescribed by a haughty priesthood, who impiously claimed to be God's vicegerents on earth in matters of faith and worship. But despite all the teachings of a despotic philosophy the voice of the God-like in man, unsilenced still, whispered to the secret soul of rights unbested by kings or pontiffs,—rights not the paltry gift of hereditary legislators—rights not conferred by edicts, charters or constitutions, but anterior to and

above all constitutions and laws,—rights *inherent and undervied*, the direct and munificent gift of God in our creation.

Again and again had the downtrodden millions of Europe appealed in vain for a recognition of these inherent rights until at length, in the Providence of God, the wilderness of the new world opened to man an asylum from oppression. Hither came our fathers—men whose heroic spirits scorned to bow at the footstool of despotic authority. They came not from the halls of wealth and luxury, where servility crooks the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning. They were men whose proud spirits chafed beneath the yoke of servitude, and who were willing to dare and to brave the privations of a wilderness home, if so be they might thereliv *Nature's own freemen*. Proudly the come, and the rocky shores of Plymouth first echo to the "tread of pioneers"—

"A nation yet to be,
The first low murmurings of a wave,
Where yet must roll a human sea."

"Not as the conqueror comes;
They, the true-hearted, came
Not with the roll of the stirring drum,
And the trumpet that sings of fame.
Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;
They shook the depths of the desert gloom,
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

"What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas? the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine.
Ay, call it holy ground
The soil where first they trod,
They left unstained what there they found—
Freedom to Worship God."

I love to contemplate the mysterious ways of Providence, in opening here in the new world the arena in which is to be finally wrought out the great problem of human rights. While Freedom in the old world was hopelessly crushed beneath the inextricable complication of old systems and old opinions here in a new organization of society and its institutions that Freedom had scope and opportunity to assert itself and enforce recognition. It was an organization of society *by the people and for the people*. Here sprung up the germ of a new and nobler civilization. Instead of a gradation of ranks and castes, here the poorest and the humblest stood up the peer of the noblest. Here were nourished freedom of thought, of opinion and of conscience. And when the struggle at length came between the old and des-

potic civilization of Europe, and this civilization permeated all through with the spirit of human freedom, and finally consecrated by the baptism blood upon the fields of Lexington and Bunker Hill, our fathers stood up in the simple majesty of truth, and appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of their intentions put solemnly upon record before all the world their immortal declaration of human rights. They declared as self-evident truths that all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights, to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and that to secure those rights, governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. In making this declaration they drew their theories not from the established schools of political wisdom so long recognized as authority in matters of human government, but catching their inspiration directly from the voice of God, speaking through the consciousness of every man, they sent forth their declaration to the world as a new Evangel of human rights.

They startled, by the boldness of their conceptions, the lethargic dreamers of the old world, and the despots of Europe, though intrenched behind their long established prerogatives, beheld in this declaration the handwriting upon the wall denoting that their systems had been weighed in the balance of Eternal Truth and found wanting. But the poor and the downtrodden everywhere hailed it as an omen of good. It stood out and so may it ever stand as a beacon light to all the world, catching from afar the despairing gaze of the downtrodden ones of earth, betokening hope and promise to all, inviting to our shores the oppressed of every nation and clime, and accomplishing at length, not by bloodshed and conquest, those means by which despots enlarge the borders of their empires, but by the influence of a noble example, of a pure civilization and of institutions cemented in the affections of a united and loyal people the political regeneration of the race.

Be it ever ours, my countrymen, to stand by the principles of this declaration. Be it ever ours to plant ourselves firmly upon the doctrine of the inalienable rights of man, guarding well the integrity of those principles which our fathers taught us, and watching jealously

against every attempt from whatever quarter to corrupt or overreach upon them.

The political institutions of any people, whatever they may be, are in the nature of things aggressive. In this commercial age,—this age of rapid and continuous interchange of thought between the remotest corners of the earth, the springs of political life in any one nation are continually, though it may be silently, permeating and transforming the whole civilization of the world.—Nations as well as individuals, have, in the Providence of God, their distinctive missions to perform in the advancement of civilization and the elevation of the human race. Nations are but representatives of great ideas underlying the political and social well-being of man; and in the progressive development of the history of a nation does the great idea of which that nation is the representative gradually work itself out and impress itself upon the customs, the habits of thought, the institutions and the civilization of the human race. Look at the empire of old Rome when sitting enthroned in the seven-hilled city, the despotic Caesar ruled the world. The great idea of which the Roman Empire was the representative was that of *absolute, uncontrolled, irresponsible, regal authority*, an idea fitly represented in the vision of the prophet Daniel as the empire of *iron*. Rome lived out her day and performed her mission, and the great idea of despotic authority developed to its utmost limit remained for centuries the ruling spirit—the controlling element of the civilization of the world.—Look at the mighty Empire of Charles V., the great representative of religious fanaticism and papal intolerance.—Though that Empire crumbled to fragments the moment its master spirit exchanged his throne for a cloister, yet it existed long enough to bequeath to mankind the Spanish Inquisition, and to evoke and let loose upon the world the fell demon of religious persecution, whose thirst for blood could not be slaked even by a St. Bartholomew massacre. Our nation too has its distinctive mission,—a mission, however, not to enslave men but to free them—not to enchain the conscience but to enfranchise it—not to assert the doctrine of prerogative in kings but of innate rights in man. In this great struggle which for these many centuries has been going on,

between despotic power on the one hand and the inalienable rights of man on the other, God has at length raised up and appointed this nation to become the great champion of the rights of man. He has appointed us to the ultimate development of the great fundamental idea of individual rights—rights bestowed on man at his creation and which no authority on earth can rightfully take away. This is the great idea which we as a nation represent. It is the idea which permeates and gives character to all our institutions. Take it away and those institutions are robbed of their inner life and our history of its meaning. You might as well attempt to blot the sun from the creation, or Christ from the Bible, as to take from our nation this great pervading idea. And when this idea shall meet its full and ultimate development, and its final results are bequeathed to humanity,—when this great problem of self-government shall be finally solved for all time and for all men, and the dross of old systems be transmuted into the pure gold of righteous government,—then, and not till then, will this nation have accomplished its mission and fulfilled the destiny to which God hath appointed her.

I have thus traced at some length the mysterious ways of Providence in planting and raising up a nation here in the new world prepared for the accomplishment of this great work. I have alluded to our gradual growth from a few feeble colonies to populous and powerful States, until, on the 4th day of July, 1776, in the fullness of time, we were called upon to put on the armor of this great warfare. Worthy were the fathers of the Revolution of the high vocation wherewith they were called. They fought the good fight, and now that they have finished their course, there is henceforth and to all time laid up for them a crown of imperishable glory, freely, nay, reverently accorded them by a grateful posterity. They have laid down the weapons of their warfare and have passed away to their reward. But the mighty struggle goes on. Between Freedom and Oppression, the two great contending forces, the antagonism is irreconcilable. There is an "*irrepressible conflict*," a necessary and inevitable warfare between Freedom and Oppression. They are necessarily hostile, and wherever they co-exist, whether in the same commonwealth or in separate na-

tions, there is of necessity hostility, antagonism, conflict. This mighty struggle has come down to us from former generations, and it must go on until Oppression shall be vanquished and Freedom become finally and universally triumphant.

We stand to-day, my fellow-citizens, at the auspicious close of another and a most notable chapter of this same great normal contest on behalf of Freedom and Humanity. During the last few years our nation has grappled in a life and death struggle with the most stupendous insurrection of modern times. War has been waged upon us upon a scale having scarcely a parallel in history. Armies outnumbering by far, the mightiest hosts marshalled upon the bloodiest battle-fields of Europe, have been called into the field. Battles have succeeded each other in rapid succession, many of which, in respect of numbers engaged, the desperate valor displayed and the terrible carnage produced have taken the foremost rank among the world's great battles.

Much has been said about the causes of this war. Much needless speculation has been indulged in as to who were responsible in bringing this war about, and as to how its terrible visitation might have been altogether averted. I do not propose in the least to palliate or excuse the guilt of those men who, by a causeless and unholy rebellion against a beneficent government, opened upon us the floodgates of war and sent forth desolation and bloodshed to hold high carnival for four years, over half a continent. Fallen human nature knows no crime of deeper dye than that committed by those men, who purposely and of their malice aforethought brought on this war. Let their names be blotted out and their memories be forever accursed. Let the vengeance of the broken law speedily overtake them, *and palsied be the hand that would seek to interpose any shield between them and the doom of a traitor.* But, fellow citizens, I may be permitted to say that we must look for the real, ultimate cause of this war, not in Northern agitation nor Southern fanaticism, but in that great fact, lying back of and beneath all these, that the two great antagonistic forces of Freedom and Slavery stood confronting each other upon the soil of the Republic. Are we at a loss to dis-

cover why this war came upon us, when there were existing in our nation elements, *which, by the law of inevitable necessity, MUST FIGHT?* It matters little who or what was the immediate cause of the conflict, since while these two contending forces co-existed the war itself was inevitable. It is possible that less boldness of denunciation at the North, and less bitterness of invective at the South, might have delayed it for a season; *but come it must.* It may be that compromises and emollients skillfully applied might have baffled it and delayed it for a while; but nothing short of the hand of the Omnipotent could have averted its final coming. It is idle for us to speculate as to the merely accidental instruments in precipitating the conflict. So long as right and wrong must of necessity fight, he is the real author of the conflict, by whose agency the wrong exists. So, in the judgment of impartial history, will the real guilt of this terrible war rest with crushing weight upon those men North or South, whoever they may be, by whose agency or countenance the iniquitous system of human slavery had its existence or had been nurtured into strength. This war is no mere accident in history. It is not a thing which might or might not have taken place, and still have left the great moral questions of the age the same. This war is but another chapter in the great normal conflict in which we have been embarked from our earliest history, and which it is the mission of this nation to carry on. It is but another grappling of the same giant forces between whom is being waged this perpetual warfare in behalf of the inalienable rights of man. It is useless to look at the *ostensible* issues upon which either party—the North or the South—embarked in this war. It makes no difference what were the pretenses put forward, or the principles declared upon which the parties assumed to undertake and carry the war on. I know that during the early months of the rebellion both parties strove to ignore the great moral questions which were really the basis of the controversy. The South said: "We are fighting for our *independence*, and not for the perpetuity of our peculiar institutions." The North said: "We are fighting for national unity, and not for the overthrow of slavery." It was assumed in the outset by both parties that the war had nothing to do

with the iniquitous system, and that result as it might, that system would remain intact. How utterly vain and shortsighted proved all such theories of the nature of the contest, and the real purposes which the war was destined to subserve. Behind all these theories, behind all congressional resolutions and official manifestos, these two mighty forces—Freedom and Despotism were the real parties arrayed in the contest, shaping and controlling all its issues, and it was not until the North came to understand the real nature of the struggle and to array herself unreservedly upon the side of Freedom and Humanity that a just and beneficent Providence vouchsafed to us the victory.

As in the days of the Revolution, so now Freedom on the one hand and Oppression on the other were the real parties to this controversy. The same great principles which were involved in the war of our Independence, have a second time been fought over in the war that has just closed. The same holy cause that nerved the arms of our brave sires at Bunker Hill, at Saratoga, and at Yorktown, also nerved the arms of their no less gallant descendants at Chattanooga and Antietam and Gettysburgh. The war of the rebellion was a war undertaken by the South, not so much upon the administration of our government as upon the principles upon which that government rests. It was a reaction, not against the election of Abraham Lincoln, but against the principles of the Declaration of Independence. Alexander H. Stephens pronounced slavery to be the *corner stone* of the Confederacy, and the Richmond *Enquirer*, the official organ of Jefferson Davis, early in the war held such language as this:

"The establishment of the Confederacy is verily a distinct *reaction* against "the whole course of the *mistaken civilization of the age. For liberty, equality, fraternity, we have deliberately substituted slavery.*"

A reaction against the civilization of the age! What civilization? What is the distinctive civilization of the age? It is the civilization of liberty, equality and fraternity, for which they deliberately substituted slavery. It is the civilization which we are here to celebrate to-day. It is the civilization of our immortal Declaration of Independence, the civilization of indefeasible, innate,

God-given rights. As I said before, the principles which nerved the hearts of our fathers to strike for liberty or death, also nerved the loyal hosts of this second great revolution in behalf of self-government, to strike for the sacred birthright that God has given us; "to strike for the green graves of our sires, God and our native land." God from the beginning has ordained this land to be theatre upon which is to be finally settled this great problem of human rights, and in the war that has recently closed has the same cause that achieved its earliest triumphs upon the battlefields of the Revolution gained a second great crowning victory. In this war we have done more than put down a mere insurrection against our political establishment. We have done more than subdue a revolt of a portion of our territory. We have done more, infinitely more, than merely vindicate the integrity of our geographical boundaries. These results we have achieved, it is true, and they are indeed results which, of themselves, will repay all the blood and toil and treasure we have expended in this war. But we have done infinitely more; *we have achieved a victory in behalf of principles as sacred as the truth of God, and as far reaching as humanity.*"

It is fitting that to-day, the day sacred to Freedom, we rejoice and exult over the downfall of the rebellion, and the eternal overthrow of those principles of despotism of which that rebellion was the representative. Let us rejoice that it has been made the high prerogative of the men of to-day to give practical significance to the great catholic utterance of the Declaration of Independence, that "*all men are created equal.*" It has been our high prerogative to prove that this declaration it not what is has been sneeringly termed, "*a string of glittering generalities,*" but the enunciation of great practical truths, finding their realization in the institutions of our country regenerated and purified through the fiery ordeal of war. Let us rejoice that our nation is to-day not merely in profession but in truth the representative of *free thought, free speech, free institutions, free men.*

Ninety-one years have passed away since our country took its place among the nations of the earth. From a few feeble colonies, skirting the Atlantic seaboard, we have spread our civilization and authority in a broad zone across the

continent, until upon the farthest Pacific slopes the chosen emblem of our nationality now waves over mighty States. In population, in intelligence, in material wealth, in the development of the arts in all the material of national greatness, we have made advancement in a ratio unparalleled in the history of this or any other age. Our flag is known and honored on every sea and in every port. By a wise, judicious and patriotic administration of the internal affairs of our government for so long a period of years, our institutions have become matured and solidified, and the individual prosperity and happiness of our citizens fostered and protected to a degree unequalled in any other part of the civilized world. In foreign wars we have shown ourselves able to cope with the strongest, and in the suppression of the late rebellion we have been able to give the last crowning proof of the strength of our form of government.

The severest test to which any nation can be subjected, is the test of civil war. When the elements of this great rebellion were gathering, and the storm clouds of civil war begun to lift themselves up above our national horizon, the wisest and most farseeing were filled with doubt and apprehension as to the result. We were entering upon realities untried, yet big with awful responsibilities.—We looked to the past and it furnished us with no safe chart to guide us over the untried sea of civil war. Expedients without number, diverse and contradictory, were proposed and urged by loyal statesmen. We had long been a peaceful nation. War had to us peculiar horrors. Many of our best men were seemingly ready to go almost to the verge of surrendering our national honor to avert it. Long used to quiet and the refinements of peaceful life, our people had learned to look with aversion upon scenes of violence and bloodshed. Where were now the heroic daring and the martial ardor, out of which might spring up the armies to fight the battles of the Republic? The hosts of treason vainly imagined that the courage, intrepidity and heroism of the fathers of the Revolution had died out in the hearts of their peaceful descendants. Fatal mistake and delusion! Those martial qualities were not *dead*, they only *slept*, and it needed only the call of an imperilled country to wake them to terrible energy. When

first the cry of "TREASON" rang through the land, and the tocsin of war summoned the patriot hosts to the rescue of their country, our fathers, brothers, sons, long used though they were to peace, and surrounded by the endearments of home, started up from city and hamlet, from mountain and prairie, all over the broad land and in unnumbered hosts marched to the defence of Freedom and their country. From every portion of the teeming North, from all classes and occupations, the husbandman from his plow, the smith from his anvil, the weaver from his loom, the merchant from his store, the lawyer from his office, the preacher of the Gospel from the sacred desk, the rich, the poor, the learned, the unlearned,—all moved by one simultaneous overmastering impulse, rushed to the ranks of the patriot army. By one spontaneous upheaval a mighty host, outnumbering by far the proudest armies that had ever trod the soil of modern Europe, gathered themselves to battle. With one single impulse pervading all, and moved by an enthusiasm sublimer than that which nerved the Puritan soldiers of Cromwell to fight the battles of God and the Commonwealth, their serried ranks were filled in unbroken phalanx as they marched to the conflict. Mightier hosts by far than ever owned the sway of the first Napoleon, larger armies than those which decided the destinies of the world on the great battlefields of history, were gathered together. The civilized world looked on with awe and amazement as a peaceful population became transformed as by miracle into a nation of martial heroes. They went not forth in search of gain nor in quest of adventure. They went forth moved by a stern conviction of imperative patriotic duty. They went forth because their country—that country which they loved better than ease and home and the dear objects of domestic love, was in danger. They went forth because the principles of Freedom and truth were in jeopardy—because those institutions upon which hung the hopes of earth's unnumbered millions were threatened with overthrow. Search all the records of the past, and you will fail to find another chapter in the world's history possessing the moral sublimity of this great uprising in behalf of our imperilled institutions.

Gallantly did our citizen soldiery go forth to the conflict, and gallantly did

they persevere in the contest until their efforts were crowned at length with victory. For four long weary years the terrible war continued. We had our victories and our defeats, our times of rejoicing and our times of darkness and despondency. Sometimes the surcharged clouds of war hung heavy and threatening on every hand, and hope in the heart of the nation almost died out. But amid all, our brave soldiers stood firm and unmoved at their posts. On a hundred battle-fields, where the dread enginery of war reaped its fell harvest from the serried ranks, they bared their brows in death's face; and a hundred battle fields have been rendered sacred to all time by the heroic ashes of their slain. Thousands upon thousands of our brave boys sleep in soldiers' graves upon the soil which their valor has redeemed, and the humble slabs which mark the places of their internment point in solemn silence from the place of their ashes to the repose of their souls. Brave men! Heroic dead! Nobly have they fallen. They have passed from their labors and conflicts on earth, but the glorious results of their achievements still live. They have not fought or died in vain. Be it ours to cherish in perpetual greenness their memories, to emulate their patriotism, to revere their sublime sacrifices, and to preserve and protect for all time those immortal truths in defence of which they have so gallantly, and so freely offered up their lives.—Posterity will honor them, the world will honor them, and the bright halo of glory that shall encircle the brow of the patriot dead shall only grow brighter and more glorious as years advance and the grand results of their labors and sacrifices are developed.

I see before me, too, those of our intrepid soldiery who having finished well the service to which their country called them, have now returned again to our midst. Welcome, thrice welcome brave men. Words of mine are too feeble to express the emotions with which we greet the loyal and the brave, who having sacredly kept their vow "to rescue our country, to save her or die," who, having dared all that man can dare, and bared their brows in the face of death on the battle-fields of this terrible war, now come back to us to enjoy with us the fruits of those victories which their valor has achieved. Soldiers of this second revolution in behalf of self-govern-

ment, your country extends to you to-day the hand of greeting. You have filled well and nobly the high vocation to which your country called you. You went forth upon a holy mission, bearing to the hosts of treason "a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel." Before your terrible preaching of that Gospel you have seen the slave-pampered, haughty aristocracy of the South pricked in the heart and pleading for mercy and pardon at the hands of that Government they so recently affected to despise. You have vindicated for all time the most sacred principles of government. With a heel of iron have you crushed the head of that great serpent Slavery, which for so many years had been slowly winding its sinewy coils around the fair form of our noble commonwealth. Through your invincible gallantry, displayed upon the battlefields of this war, the principles of the Revolution of 1776 have been carried out and made triumphant, the nation is redeemed, the rebellion put down, traitor's subdued, the integrity of the Union secured for all time, Slavery at an end, and the nation once more started on its career and grandeur and glory, only strengthened and purified by the fiery ordeal of war. Soldiers of Freedom, the proud consciousness of these glorious results carries with it its own reward.—Come back, then, to the pursuits of peace, followed by the blessings of a grateful country. May your days be long in the land which your intrepidity has rescued from impending ruin, and may that Divine Providence that shielded your heads in the day of battle still protect you through all the scenes of life, and at last give you ready admission to the company of the good and the brave whose names are written in Heaven.

Fellow-citizens, when we turn our eyes from beholding the past and look forward to the great and sublime future that opens before our country, how do our hearts fill with pride at what our country is and at what she is yet to become. If there is any earthly vision, which, to me, is brighter than all others, it is that which I see when I look forward to the future in which this great nation shall go on developing her power and material resources, increasing in virtue and intelligence, and working out to its ultimate results the problem of self-government. In that great day, which is yet to come, when those exhaust-

less material resources which the God of Nature has scattered about us on every side with a lavish hand shall be gathered up and made tributary to our national wealth; when these vast prairies shall garner all their teeming harvests into the nations storeroom; when the mighty wilderness of the West, whose virgin soil is still untrodden by the foot of civilization, shall bud and blossom as the rose; when our broad acres shall disclose their still latent fertility, and our rocks and mountains shall give up all their yet undiscovered mineral wealth; when industry, ingenuity and invention shall have exhausted all the appliances of mechanical skill, and the vast oceans shall be specked all over with the sails of our commerce, then shall we begin to find a realization of the great destiny which lies before us. With only the ratio of increase in population which has been exhibited all through our past history, the man is now born who will live to see the stars and stripes floating over a population numerically greater than the present population of all Christendom combined. Our material wealth is increasing and is bound to increase in a ratio more rapid still. With such vigorous growth with intelligence universally diffused, with such rewards following well-doing as will prompt men to the practice of virtue, with equal rights guaranteed to all men, even the humblest and the great principles of our civilization continuing to control and permeate our national life, our nation starts henceforth upon a career of grandeur and glory to achieve a future grander than our hearts have found strength to conceive. Then still united; then with the proud old flag still high advanced, the bands of our National Union encircling the North and the South, the East and the West, and the spirit of 1776 still continuing to preside over and control us, shall this nation remain *now and forever* ONE AND INSEPARABLE.

Our strength is and ever must be in our union. Travelers from the ruins of old Rome inform us that amid the ruins of old temples and the decaying fragments of broken columns and the pilasters there stands a noble arch. About it on every side are the desolations which time has wrought, but there stands that arch unmoved, every stone in its place, and the cap-stone in its proper position. The desolations of war and the mighty tramp of the centuries have passed over

it, but there it stands solitary and sublime. Why stands that ancient arch today? Why has it not perished with the other monuments of human greatness by which it was once surrounded? Its strength and stability exist in its union. Take from that arch a single stone; strike from any part a section, however small, and it falls at once an undistinguishable mass of ruins. So is it with this nation of ours. So long as we are united; so long as every State remains true to the Union, and occupies its appropriate place in our grand old National Arch, so long the Republic will stand, only strengthened and solidified by the march of years. My countrymen be

true to the Union. Guard it as the palladium of our national existence. Let it be first and foremost in every system of political faith. Watch jealously every attempt from whatever quarter to weaken or undermine it. And if ever in the distant future the impious hand of treason shall be again raised to dissolve this Union, and to strike the keystone from out our grand old National Arch, as in the case of the last rebellion over which we have so signally triumphed, so may God grant that then "a million gleaming swords may leap from their rests and point every way to guard the temple of our liberties."







LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 801 827 8